

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC RECORDS ACCESS

Department Organization

The Department is organized into five Divisions plus the Office of Strategic Finance and the Office of Legal Counsel. The Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Executive Assistant, and Division Administrators hold “state public offices” as defined in the statutes. The Administrator of each Division is the legal custodian of the records of that Division, and the Director of the Office of Strategic Finance and Chief Counsel of the Office of Legal Counsel are the legal custodians of the records of their respective Offices. In some parts of the Department, the legal custodians have delegated their authority to deputy custodians. The legal custodians and their deputies are responsible for deciding whether requested records can be disclosed to the public and for ensuring that record requests are processed appropriately. However, you can also make record requests to other Department staff, who will refer the request to the applicable person.

The Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) administers programs affecting children and families, including the child welfare system in Milwaukee County and the regulation of child care and child welfare statewide. Room 550; 267-1251.

The Division of Disability and Elder Services (DDES) administers programs involving mental health, substance abuse, disabilities, aging and long-term support, adult care, regulation and licensing of adult care programs and facilities, and the state supplemental security income program. DDES also operates state institutions that provide care and treatment for persons with mental illness, developmental disabilities, or sexually violent behaviors. Room 850; 266-2000.

The Division of Public Health (DPH) administers public health programs, including communicable disease, environmental, occupational, and family/community health, chronic disease, disease/injury prevention, emergency medical services, the vital records system and certain health planning systems. Room 250; 266-1251. The Division of Health Care Financing (DHCF) administers essential health and nutrition programs to include Medical Assistance, BadgerCare, SeniorCare, and FoodShare to children, low-income families and elderly, and persons with disabilities. Room 350; 266-8922.

The Division of Management and Technology (DMT) provides management support to the Department for fiscal services, information technology, personnel, affirmative action and employment relations. Room 672; 266-8445. The Office of Strategic Finance (OSF) provides department-wide planning, budgeting and evaluation services. It is also responsible for contract administration, oversight of county human service agencies and management of tribal affairs. Room 618; 266-3816.

The Office of Legal Counsel provides legal advice and representation to the Department. Room 651; 266-8428.

Record Access Rights

Record requests may be made orally unless security requirements or an applicable law necessitate a written request. If you are denied access to or a copy of a record, you must be informed of the legal basis for the denial. If your request was in writing, you may appeal the denial by bringing an action for mandamus in the circuit court of the county in which the record is held. You may also submit a written request to that county’s District Attorney or to the state Attorney General to bring a mandamus action.

Office Hours

Records can be requested during normal office hours. Department offices are open 7:45 AM-11:45 AM and 12:30 PM-4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, except holidays. Some records may only be available at the Department’s main offices at 1 West Wilson Street, P. O. Box 7850, Madison, Wisconsin 53707.

Costs

If no other copy fee is set by law, the usual charge for each side of a photocopied page is 15 cents. If a record is in a form that can’t be photocopied, you may be charged the actual cost of producing a copy. In addition, if copies are mailed or shipped to you, you may be asked to pay for the actual cost of the mailing or shipping. If a fee for locating a record is set by law, you will be charged that fee; otherwise, the cost of locating a record may be charged only if the actual cost of locating the record is \$50 or more. If a requested record is partly confidential and partly non-confidential, you may be charged the actual cost of deleting the confidential part from the non-confidential part. Prepayment of costs may be required if total costs exceed \$5 or if otherwise required by law.